

500 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

500 OVERVIEW

To maintain a level of activity commensurate with the fair's need for board oversight and decision making, every Fair Board (Board) needs to elect officers who are willing to assume responsibility for routine Board activities. Similarly, every Board needs standing committees made up of board members organized to gather information and consider options for Board action in matters of policy and finance. In addition, directors may need to serve on ad hoc committees appointed by the Board chair to fulfill special, time-limited functions or on advisory committees for purposes specified at the time of their formation. (Refer to sample Fair Board Policy Manual in Appendix M, Chapter 400).

Members and appointing authority California has 54 District Agricultural Associations (DAA's) which statute defines as state institutions. Each DAA board has nine members, all of whom are appointed by the Governor. California has 23 county fairs and two citrus fruit fairs, most of which are organized as nonprofit fair associations and affiliate with their host counties through contractual agreements approved by CDFA. County or citrus fruit Fair Board members are either appointed by county boards of supervisors or are self-appointed by fair associations. On these 25 boards, the number of members ranges from 7 to 33.

501 PUBLIC MEETING LAWS

Public meeting laws apply to meetings of all varieties of committees, including community advisory committees if more than two Board directors are also advisory committee members. Fair Board members are responsible for strict adherence to public meeting laws. If your fair is a DAA, the fair should have a copy of a report prepared by the Attorney General's Office: *Bagley-Keen Open Meeting Act*; this report covers open meeting requirements applicable to state agencies. If your fair is not a DAA, the fair should have a copy of *The Brown Act*, also prepared by the Attorney General's Office; this report covers open meeting requirements applicable to local agencies. Refer to Appendixes N and O, Section 500 for these documents. Your CEO can obtain additional copies by calling the Publications Office in the Department of Justice in Sacramento at 916.324.5765 or by Internet at www.caag.state.ca.us

502 BOARD STRUCTURE AND OFFICERS

Most Boards elect a Board chair (or president), vice chair, secretary, and treasurer (or secretary/treasurer). The fair's policy manual and/or bylaws should include descriptions of duties, functions, and responsibilities for each Board officer (Refer to sample By Laws and sample Fair Board Policy Manual, Appendixes L and M, Chapter 400).

502.1 Roles and Responsibilities of the Board President

The chairperson of any Board performs the following functions:

- Organizes an effective Board that encourages maximum contributions by directors
- Creates a partnership with the CEO, and his or her staff, in achieving the organization's mission
- Consults with the CEO in planning every Board meeting agenda and conducts purposeful, productive meetings that make the best possible use of board members' time
- Attends committee meetings as an ex officio member, as time permits
- Maintains a close interface with the CEO on all issues confronting the organization, including concerns raised by the Board
- Monitors financial planning and financial reports
- Plays a leading role in fund raising activities that involve Board participation
- Serves within the community as a representative and spokesperson
- Ensures that new Board members receive orientation materials and have opportunities to participate in events and activities that help them become acquainted with the fair
- Assumes responsibility for Board discipline in adhering to written policies and protocols
- Maintains Board control during meetings
- Serves as primary liaison between the Board and Government agencies (CDFA, County, etc.)

502.2 Organization Chart

Every fair should have an organization chart to represent the relationships between the Board and management. In addition, the CEO should provide Board members with copies of the chart he or she has created to depict the structure he or she has designed for management of the fair.

503 STANDING COMMITTEES

Every Board member has a duty to serve on at least one standing committee.¹ Standing Board committees are permanent committees that meet on an ongoing basis and are established in the bylaws. The Board chair appoints members to standing committees and appoints the chair of each committee. The Executive Committee, which generally is composed of current officers plus the CEO,² is authorized to act on the Board's behalf when time is of the essence, however, full Board approval of important decisions is always preferred. All other standing committees lack authority to make decisions unless this authority was expressly delegated to them by binding action taken by the Board in a

¹The Board chair ensures that all directors have equal opportunity to participate on Board committees. It is important to recognize, however, that not all Board members desire this opportunity and some are unable to commit the time.

²Often, membership on the Executive Committee includes the immediate past chair.

noticed public meeting. Typically, Board committees recommend actions to the full Board for discussion and vote.

504 AD HOC COMMITTEES

Most bylaws include a provision for the Board chair to be authorized at any time to appoint an ad hoc committee to study a specific issue or implement a particular project. When an ad hoc committee has made its report or finished its project, it automatically disbands.

505 COMMUNITY ADVISORY/RELATIONS COMMITTEES

A Board may appoint a community advisory committee as a means of gathering information and support related to the fair's program. Unlike the members of a governing Board, the members of a community advisory committee are not authorized to act as decision makers. In some cases, a Board appoints a community advisory committee to ensure that the fair benefits from expertise of local professionals and businesspeople. Most bylaws authorize the Board chair, at the direction of the Board, to appoint a community advisory committee for a purpose named and described by the Board.